



KICK OFF

Sin has a presence of its own in my life.

Discuss.



KEY VERSE

<sup>7</sup> If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for you, but you must rule over it." Genesis 4:7



BIG IDEA

The story of Cain and Abel shows the potency, subtlety and the eventual victory of sin.



INVESTIGATE

### THE POTENCY OF SIN

Read Genesis 4: 1—10

1. What is the striking image of sin in verse 7, used by the Holy Spirit?
2. What does the image teach about sin?
3. What are the crouching sins in your life?
4. What are the differences between Adam's and Eve's encounter With God and Cain's encounter with God.

### THE SUBTLETY OF SIN

Read Genesis 4: 1—10

5. Why is this such a brilliant narrative? What questions does it provoke in you?



DIG DEEPER

In vs 7, God, in speaking to Cain, uses a remarkable image, "*But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it.*" It's the image of a leopard or a tiger, a predatory animal, crouching in the shadows, coiled and ready to spring and kill. God says, that's sin. Sin is predatory. Sin has a deadly life of its own. How is that?

This image is telling us, if you commit sin, that sin is not over, but it becomes a presence in your life. It stays with you and begins to affect you. You say, "Well, how could that be?" Certain habits start, and you notice they become easier to do and harder to stop doing. C.S. Lewis makes the scary observation in *Mere Christianity* that at first, the Nazis killed the Jews because they hated them. Then they hated the Jews because they had killed them. Here's the point. When you sin, the sin doesn't just go away. The sin becomes a presence in your life. You can decide, "I'm not going to forgive my mother, I'm not going to forgive my father, for what he or she has done." But then it will control you, because it begins to poison your relationships with other people, in ways you don't even see.

THINK & APPLY



6. Why is Cain angry?

7. Where do we see God’s grace and justice in this passage? How do Hebrews 12:24 and 1 John 1:9 help us?

8. what makes us angry, or depressed? How does 1 John 1: 9 and God’s grace and justice help?

9. Two references to consider in our spiritual battle: 1 Peter 5:8, Ephesians 6: 10—20. How can they help us

In this image sin is not only predatory, the idea of sin crouching at the door, gets across the fact that sin hides. If you see a crouching tiger, you have a chance. You can get a couple of steps on it, but if you don’t see a crouching tiger, the more vulnerable you are, and the more likely you are to die. This means the worst things in your life and character are the flaws that you are in denial about, that you rationalize, and minimize and that you are blind to. They are the ones, whatever the consequences, when somebody brings them up, you rationalize them. By definition, these are the crouching sins in your life. As long as we look at workaholism as conscientiousness, as long as you look at your grudge as moral outrage, as long as you look at materialism as ambition, as long as you look at your obsession with looks as good grooming, you’re vulnerable. You’re in denial.

**PRAISE GOD** for his grace and justice.

**CONFESS** the potency and subtlety of sin in our lives.

**ASK GOD** for an assurance of His love and forgiveness to the depths of our being.

**PRAY ALSO** for a healthy Christian community where we are both loved and held accountable.



PRAYER

Praise God for the challenges raised by God’s word through this study Praying for others in your group:

Pray for others in your group



FAMILY DISCUSSION

How do we apply this passage in our daily life?



READ AHEAD

Next week’s topic is: *A Taste of Two Cities—Genesis 4:10—26*